

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ( ISO ) W  
----- 039245  
R 030039Z JUL 75  
FM AMEMBASSY MEXICO  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8676

C O N F I D E N T I A L MEXICO 5897

STADIS////////////////////////////////////

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PFOR, MX  
SUBJECT: PRESIDENT ECHEVERRIA'S UNEXPECTED INVITATION TO  
PRESIDENT FORD

1. SENATOR MANSFIELD AND I HAD A MOST CORDIAL CONVERSA-  
TION LASTING MORE THAN AN HOUR WITH PRESIDENT ECHEVERRIA  
WHO RECEIVED THE SENATOR AT THE DOOR OF HIS CAR.
2. THE FIRST PART OF THE CONVERSATION WAS DOMINATED BY  
ECHEVERRIA WHO DESCRIBED HIS FORTHCOMING TRIP TO AFRICA  
AND THE MID EAST (REPORTED IN SEPTEL) AND STRESSED THE  
COMPARATIVE POLITICAL PEVGS#ENJOYED BY MEXICO DURING HIS  
ADMINISTRATION THANKS TO HIS TACTICS OF OPENING DOORS TO  
THE LEFT, BOTH DOMESTICALLY AND INTERNATIONALLY.
3. WHEN SENATOR MANSFIELD HAD OPPORTUNITY TO SPEAK, HE  
MENTIONED THAT HE BROUGHT GREETINGS FROM PRESIDENT FORD  
WHOM HE HAD SEEN JUST PRIOR TO TRAVELING TO MEXICO. THE  
SENATOR SAID THAT HE HAD OBSERVED TO PRESIDENT FORD THAT  
NO U.S. PRESIDENT HAD VISITED MEXICO CITY SINCE JOHNSON'S  
TIME AND THAT IN HIS OPINION SKCH A VISIT WAS NOW DUE.  
HE SAID THAT PRESIDENT FORD HAD REPLIED THAT WHILE HE WOULD ENJOY  
VISITING MEXICO, HE DID NOT WISH TO COME AT SUCH A TIME AS  
MIGHT INTERFERE WITH THE DELICATE POLITICAL PROCESS CON-  
NECTED WITH THE FORTHCOMING MEXICAN PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN.

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RM ECHEVERRIA RESPONDED WITH ENTHUSIASM SAYING THAT HE WISHED SENATOR MANSFIELD WOULD ASSURE PRESIDELA FORD ON A PERSONAL BASIS, WHILE AT THE SAME TIME HE REQUESTED THE AMBASSADOR TO DO SO ON AN OFFICIAL BASIS, THAT PRESIDENT FORD WOULD BE WELCOMED WITH ENTHUSIASM AT ANY TIME HE CHOSE TO COME. ECHEVERRIA SAID THAT HE HIMSELF WOULD NOT RETURN FROM HIS TRIP TO AFRICA AND THE FAR EAST UNTIL MID-AUGUST, BUT HOPED THAT WE COULD WORK OUT A MUTUALLY SATISFACTORY DATE FOR A VISIT BY PRESIDENT FORD, HOPEFULLY ACCOMPANIED BY MRS. FORD, ANY TIME AFTER HIS RETURN IN MID-AUGUST.

5. IN THIS CONNECTION, HE OBSERVED THAT THE PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES WOULD BE CHOSEN BY THEIR PARTIES POSSIBLY IN SEPTEMBER OR OCTOBER, THAT THE PRI CANDIDATE WOULD WIN (UNDERSTATEMENT OF THE YEAR) BY AN OVERWHELMING MAJORITY WHILE THE PAN CANDIDATE WOULD GET A MAXIMUM OF PERHAPS 12 TO 14 PERCENT OF THE VOTE. HE COULD ASSURE US THAT THE MEXICAN POLITICAL PROCESS WOULD NOT BE AFFECTED BY A PRESIDENTIAL VISIT AND THAT PRESIDENT FORD WOULD BE EVEN MORE ENTHUSIASTICALLY RECEIVED THAN DURING HIS VISIT TO LAREDO AND MAGDALENA DE KINO. HE REMINISCED REGARDING PRESIDENT JOHNSON'S VISIT WHICH WAS DONE, (HE SAID NOT WITHOUT TRACES OF DISMAY) WITH ONLY 28 HOURS' NOTICE, THAT HE WAS THE ARRANGER FOR THYS VISIT AND IT WAS ONE OF THE MOST GRANDIOSE MEXICO HAS HAD -- WITH MORE NOTICE PRESIDENT FORD WOULD GET AN EVEN BETTER RECEPTION.

6. AT THE END OF OUR CONVERSATION ECCEVERRIA HIMSELF AGAIN RAISED THE MATTER OF A POSSIBLE PRESIDENTIAL VISIT AND WARMLY REITERATED HIS INVITATION.

7. COMMENT: REGARDLESS OF ECHEVERRIA'S OPEN-HEARTED STATEMENT OF WELCOME, I WOULD RECOMMEND AGAINST ANY PRESIDENTIAL VISIT, IF INDEED ONE IS TO TAKE PLACE, UNTIL AFTER THE MEXICAN PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES HAVE BEEN CHOSEN. A VISIT BEFORE THAT MIGHT BE INTERPRETED AS AN ATTEMPT TO INFLUENCE THE CHOICE OF THE CANDIDATES. JOVA

NOTE BY OC/T: #AS RECEIVED.CONFIDENTIAL  
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**TAGS:** PFOR, OVIP, OREP, MX, US, XA, XC, (ECHEVERRIA ALVAREZ, LUIS), (FORD, GERALD R), (MANSFIELD, MIKE)  
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